

A Champion of Education



Godfrey Langlois, M.L.A.,
Montreal.

THE struggle for better education in every Province in Canada, is proceeding apace. This year both New Brunswick and Ontario have largely increased their grants to the Public Schools, and the other provinces are effecting similar advances along the lines of educational policy. Without any desire to find fault or belittle the Province of Quebec, it must be admitted that their public schools are not in as good a condition as those of the other provinces.

Quebec, too, is awaking to the need for better things, and one of the men who is contributing much to this awaking is Mr. Godfrey E. Langlois, M.L.A. for the St. Louis division of Montreal. Having spent seven or eight years in continuously advocating reforms in educational matters, Mr. Langlois is naturally qualified to speak with authority, and it is not surprising that a recent speech of his on the subject should have created considerable comment. Some of the points made were really startling. For instance, teachers in Quebec are receiving less money than they were twenty years ago. It seems incredible but the average salary of 4,700 female teachers was but \$119 as compared with \$348 in Ontario. With salaries like these it is not surprising that there are but thirty-one lay male teachers in the elementary schools.

Another astounding fact is that, while \$465,000 was spent to take care of 3,826 lunatics in the asylums, but \$186,000 was expended on the education of 145,000 children. In other words, the province spends \$122 per head on its unfortunates, but is only able to raise \$1.20 for the education of each child per annum. Is there not something wrong, asks Mr. Langlois, when judges, members of parliament, merchants and laborers are increasing their annual earnings, while the salaries of the teachers remain the same as fifteen years ago? Defects such as these are not to be remedied by shouting patriotism and by telling each other what a great race French-Canadians are.

It seems also that the text books and the school-houses are as unsatisfactory as the system itself. With regard to the former Mr. Langlois insists absolutely on uniformity instead of the variety that now exists, and considers it nothing less than a scandal that text books in Montreal schools should cost the pupil from \$1.11 to \$2.26 annually, compared with twenty-five cents in Toronto. The condition of the school-houses may be judged from the fact that 3,920 have been condemned by the Superintendent of Education as unhygienic, while 1,165 are declared to be in a very bad condition.

For advocating reforms in these matters, Mr. Langlois has been called a demolisher, but every weak or defective system must have a demolisher some time, unless the system crumbles away of its own weakness. Mr. Langlois seems to be well qualified not only to perform the iconoclastic office of demolition but also the higher work of substituting something better than the existing system. He is a young man yet—only 40—and will probably, if he keeps up the fight, see many of his ideas upon the statute books of his native province.

None knows better than Mr. Langlois that the accomplishment of such a task as he has entered upon requires time, energy, patience and an everlasting "hammering at it." It is worth the effort, and if the present generation calls him a demolisher, the next one may call him a patriot.

An American Invader

THE American invasion may be good for the London shop-keeper but it has drawbacks. The story of Mr. George A. Kessler of the U. S. A., who has bought a beautiful Thames residence and renamed it "New York Lodge," reads like Mr. Kipling's famous tale, "An Error in the Fourth Dimension." Mr. Kessler has made his fortune in champagne and is famous for his freak dinners, the most startling of which was the

gondola dinner, given at the Savoy Hotel and costing over two thousand pounds. The guests were as remarkable as the dinner and altogether the affair brought the self-made, or champagne-made, millionaire as much



Prince Fushimi inspecting the Governor-General's Foot Guards on his arrival at the Central Station, Ottawa, June 10th.

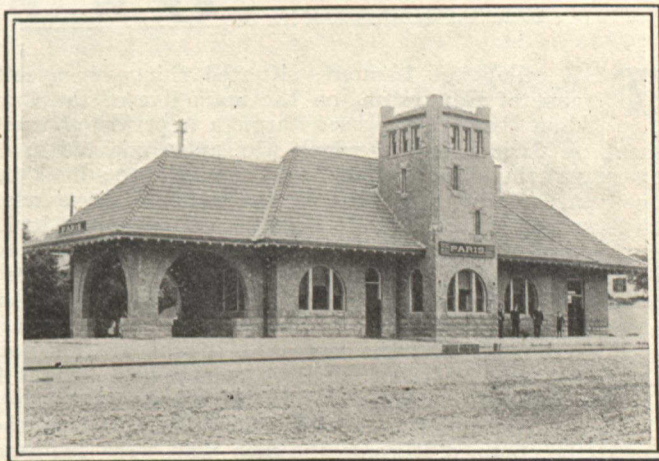
notoriety as if he had given away a world of libraries. Mr. Kessler has announced his intention of making his river retreat a "show resort," and to this end has equipped it with an amazing number of electric lights. He has aroused considerable disgust but has also attracted attention and may be said to have gained his heart's desire.

Peace Possibilities

THERE is a certain tremulousness in public utterances on the subject of the Peace Conference at

The Hague. So far, the advocates of gentle peace have not been successful in inspiring the people with confidence in their sincerity. Mr. W. T. Stead is not a consistent figure when he mounts the rostrum and expatiates on restfulness. Mr. Andrew Carnegie is a plutocratic bore who would be much more popular if he would leave his dollars to do the discoursing. Russia has stepped in where pacifiers feared to tread and declared honestly that disarmament is not her policy. Peace is a desirable condition but it is too delicate to be talked about at great length during the warm weather. The commercial advantages of peace are the most effective arguments in its favour, insomuch as the British Empire, the United States and most of their customers are a mighty band of shop-keepers. But there are certain questions which go deeper than trade principles and when they arise it is discovered that John Bull and the rest of them have guns behind the counter.

But there is one good accomplished by the national representatives meeting together and talking about their reluctance to kill one another. The grace of politeness has a rapid growth as each noble delegate steps into the background and urges the others to go forward and lay the army and the navy on the altar of the goddess of peace. There is something delicately chivalrous in the



The New G. T. R. Station at Paris.

manner in which bluff John Bull and aggressive Uncle Sam swiftly retire in order that Italy and Greece, not to mention Morocco, may come to the front as practical disarmers.